White paper on suicide

1782. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that during the past few years many farmers committed suicides in different parts of the country; and

(b) if so, whether Government would consider to place a white paper on this crucial issue before the House?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government is aware of suicides by farmers based on reports given by State Governments.

(b) In response to Rajya Sabha Calling Attention Notice on "the incidents of suicide by farmers in various parts of the country and the remedial measures taken by the Government with regard thereto" a statement has already been laid on the Table of the House on 14-7-2004.

Suitability of Bt. Cotton

1783. DR. K. KASTURIRANGAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether systematic studies have been conducted on different Bt. Cotton hybrids to evaluate their suitability under Indian conditions;

(b) if so, the main conclusions of such studies;

(c) whether such studies also address issues of ecological consequences including human health; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main conclusions are: (i) reduction in infestation of Bt.- Cotton by bollworms, (ii) reduction of up to 2-6 in number of pesticide sprays.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Studies addressing ecological consequences include: pollen escape outcrossing, aggressiveness and weediness, effect on non-target